METHOD AND DEVICE FOR DECODING REED-SOLOMON CODE OR EXTENDED REED-SOLOMON CODE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a decoding technology of performing multiple error correction for a Reed-Solomon code or an extended Reed-Solomon code.

Reed-Solomon codes have been used in digital broadcasting, digital magnetic recording and the like. In a digital cable television system in the United States, for example, an extended Reed-Solomon code is adopted.

According to a first conventional technique, when an extended Reed-Solomon code is decoded, input data that is a received word is subjected to an error correction processing, the error corrected data is subjected to a syndrome computation again to obtain corrected data syndromes, and when the input data is erroneously corrected, the input data before the error correction is output (see European Laid-Open Patent Publication No. 1280281).

According to a second conventional technique, when an extended Reed-Solomon code is decoded, syndromes are generated from a received word, the number of errors generated in the received word is estimated from these syndromes, an initial value and end conditions are for an Euclidean algorithm operation are changed and error correction is carried out according to the estimated number of errors (see United States Patent No. 6131178).

However, according to the first conventional technique, not only an extended component but also an unextended component is erroneously corrected in some cases.

According to the second conventional technique, if the number of errors is erroneously estimated, it is necessary to perform the Euclidean algorithm operation and a Chien search twice or more. This disadvantageously causes another erroneous correction in some cases.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to prevent erroneous correction generated when a Reed-Solomon code or an extended Reed-Solomon code is decoded.

In order to achieve the above object, the present invention provides a method for decoding a received word made of one of a Reed-Solomon code and an extended Reed-Solomon code having a certain number of error corrections as input data, the decoding method comprising: performing error correction for the input data using an error locator polynomial and an error evaluator polynomial derived based on the input data and syndromes of the number of error corrections to set the result of error correction as first corrected data; computing an extended component and an unextended component of syndromes of the first corrected data; and performing the error correction for the first corrected data based on the computed syndromes to set the result of error correction as second corrected data.

The decoding method further comprises: estimating the number of errors generated in the input data based on the syndromes of the input data; computing the number of errors using the error locator polynomial and the error evaluator polynomial derived based on the syndromes of the input data and the number of error corrections; and obtaining the first corrected data using the estimated number of errors and the computed number of errors.

According to the present invention, the number of errors estimated from the input data syndromes is compared with the number of errors computed during decoding process, and the error correction is performed based on this comparison result and the input data syndromes. Thereafter, the error corrected data is subjected to a syndrome computation again to obtain corrected data syndromes. When erroneous correction is performed, or the estimated number of errors differs from the computed number of errors, the input data is output as final corrected data. Therefore, it is possible to prevent erroneous correction from being performed for the extended component and the other components, and dispense with performing plural times of Euclidean algorithm operations and plural times Chien search processings. It is thereby possible to provide a decoding device architecture small in area, low in power and high in reliability. Further, it is possible to prevent erroneous correction from being performed for not only an extended Reed-Solomon code but also an ordinary Reed-Solomon code.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. **1** is a flowchart for describing one example of procedures of a method for decoding an extended Reed-Solomon code according to the present invention.

Fig. **2** is a flowchart following the flowchart of Fig. **1**.

Fig. **3** is a detailed flowchart of an error number estimation step shown in Fig. **1**.

Fig. **4** is a block diagram illustrating one example of the configuration of an extended Reed-Solomon code decoding device according to the present invention.

Fig. **5** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of a syndrome computation section shown in Fig. **4**.

Fig. **6** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of an error correction section shown in Fig. **4**.

Fig. **7** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of a first error correction section shown in Fig. **6**.

Fig. **8** is a block diagram illustrating one example of the configuration of a syndrome operator shown in Fig. **5**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

An embodiment of the present invention will be described hereinafter in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings.

An extended Reed-Solomon code to be handled herein is a singly extended Reed-Solomon code in a Galois field $GF(2^7)$ in which a code length $n = 128$, the number of error corrections $t = 3$, the number of bits per symbol $m = 7$, the number of information symbols $i_0 = 122$, the number of parity symbols $p_0 = 6$, a code polynomial before extension $W_0(x) = c_{126}x^{126} + c_{125}x^{125} + ... + c_1x + c_0$, and an extended parity symbol $c_- = W_0(\alpha^6) = c_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + c_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + ...+ c_1\alpha^6 + c_0$, a code polynomial after extension $W(x) = xW_0(x) + c_- = c_{126}x^{127} + c_{125}x^{126} + ... + c_1x^2 + c_0x + c_-$, and a primitive polynomial $P(x) = x^7 + x^3 + 1$ and

a generation polynomial $G(x) = (x + \alpha)(x + \alpha^2)(x + \alpha^3)(x + \alpha^4)(x + \alpha^5)$ are used. The code before extension, i.e., the code which is not an extended component $(c_{126}, c_{125}, \ldots, c_1, c_0)$ will be referred to as an unextended component, hereinafter. In addition, the extended parity symbol c_- will be referred to as an extended component hereinafter.

Figs. **1** and **2** are flowchart for describing a method for decoding an extended Reed-Solomon code according to the present invention. It is assumed herein that input data **DI**, which is a received word, has an error having a magnitude of e_u in a symbol at a location j_u of input data **DI**. It should be noted that the following polynomials are used.

Reception polynomial of only the unextended component $Y_0(x) = y_{126}x^{126} + y_{125}x^{125} + \ldots + y_1x + y_0$, and

Reception polynomial of the unextended component and the extended component $Y(x) = y_{126}x^{127} + y_{125}x^{126} + \ldots + y_1x^2 + y_0x + y_-$.

The location j_u of the error symbol in the input data **DI** will be referred to as an error location, hereinafter.

In Fig. **1**, step **S10** is a first syndrome computation step. In this step **S10**, the following steps **S11** and **S12** are executed to compute syndromes.

In step **S11**, syndromes of the input data **DI** = $(y_{126}, y_{125}, \ldots, y_1, y_0, y_-)$ are computed as input data syndromes **SI**. Specifically, in step **S11A**, input data syndromes of an unextended component are computed as follows.

$\mathbf{SI}_i = Y_0(\alpha^i) = y_{126}(\alpha^i)^{126} + y_{125}(\alpha^i)^{125} + \ldots + y_1\alpha^i + y_0$, where i = 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

In step **S11B**, input data syndromes of an extended component are computed as follows.

$$SI_6 = Y_0(\alpha^6) + y_- = y_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + y_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + y_1\alpha^6 + y_0 + y_-.$$

In step **S12**, it is determined whether all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero. When all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero, it is determined that the input data **DI** has no error, and the process proceeds to step **S52** in step **S50**. When one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero, it is determined that the input data **DI** has an error and the process proceeds to step **S20**.

In step **S20**, coefficients at each order of an error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ and an error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$ are computed from the input data syndromes **SI** by a Euclidean algorithm operation. The coefficients of these polynomials are output even when the order of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ is equal to or less than the order of the error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$ at the completion of the Euclidean algorithm operation.

In step **S30**, a Chien search is performed to determine roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$. Specifically, elements of the Galois field $GF(2^7)$ are sequentially substituted in the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ to determine the elements of which substitution makes the value of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ zero as the roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$. At this time, even when the number of different roots of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ in the Galois field $GF(2^7)$ is less than the order of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$, it is not determined whether error correction is possible, and the roots α^{-ju} are output. The error locations j_u correspond to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$.

Further, the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ are substituted in the error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$ to obtain respective error evaluation values $\omega(\alpha^{-ju})$. In addition, the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ are substituted in a derivative of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ to obtain error locator polynomial differential values $\sigma'(\alpha^{-ju})$.

In step **S40**, each of the error evaluation values $\omega(\alpha^{-ju})$ is divided by the corresponding error locator polynomial differential value $\sigma'(\alpha^{-ju})$ to obtain an error magnitude e_u that indicates an error bit in the symbol at the error location j_u.

In step **S50**, a first correction is performed. Specifically, the following steps **S51, S52, S53** and **S54** are executed.

In step **S51**, step **S51A** is executed to the unextended component and the extended component and step **S51B** is executed to the extended component, to perform error correction.

In step **S51A**, based on the error locations j_u corresponding to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ and the error magnitudes e_u, the input data **DI** is subjected to an error correction processing to obtain error corrected data. In addition, the following polynomials are obtained.

Polynomial of error corrected data including only the unextended component $F_0(x) = f_{126}x^{126} + f_{125}x^{125} + \ldots + f_1x + f_0$.

Polynomial of error corrected data including the unextended component and the extended component $F(x) = xF_0(x) + f_- = f_{126}x^{127} + f_{125}x^{126} + \ldots + f_1x^2 + f_0x + f_-$, where f_- is the extended component (tentative value).

Specifically, the corresponding error magnitude e_u is subtracted from the symbol at the error location j_u of the input data **DI**. Since this is an operation in the extension field of the Galois field GF(2), addition of the error magnitude e_u to the symbol is allowed in place of the subtraction.

In step **S51B**, $x=\alpha^6$ is substituted in the polynomial $F_0(x)$ of the error corrected data including only the unextended component, and the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data is further added to the substitution result in the extended component. That is, the following computation is performed.

$$F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = f_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + f_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + f_1\alpha^6 + f_0 + f_-.$$

When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is zero, it is determined that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has no error. Therefore, the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data is set as the error corrected data on the extended component as it is and it is determined that the number of errors in the extended component is NB = 0. When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is not zero, it is determined that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has an error and the error magnitude e_- of the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data is computed as $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$. Thereafter, the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data is subjected to an error correction processing, i.e., the error magnitude $e_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is added to the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as follows.

$$f_- + e_- = f_- + F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + 2f_- = F_0(\alpha^6).$$

The addition result is set as the error corrected data including the extended component and the number of errors in the extended component **NB** is set at one (NB = 1).

In step **S60**, the number of errors **EN1** that have been generated in the input data **DI** is estimated from the input data syndromes **SI** computed in step **S11** in step **S10** (the estimation will be described later in detail).

In step **S80**, the number of errors **NA** obtained from the roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ computed in step **S30** and the number of errors **NB** in the extended component that is computed in step **S51B** in step **S51** are added together. Namely, the number of errors EN2 = NA + NB is computed. It is noted, however, that the number of errors in the extended component is not repeatedly added.

In step **S53** in step **S50**, it is determined whether the number of errors **EN1** estimated in step **S60** is equal to the number of errors **EN2** computed in step **S80** and whether the number of errors **EN1** estimated in step **S60** and the number of errors **EN2** computed in step **S80** are both equal to or less than three (the number of corrections t), i.e., whether **EN1** and **EN2** satisfy a relationship of "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$". When "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$" is satisfied, the process proceeds to step **S54**. When not ("$EN1 \neq EN2$, $EN1 > 3$ or $EN2 > 3$), the process proceeds to step **S52**.

In step **S54**, which is executed when one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero and the **EN1** and the **EN2** satisfy "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$", the error corrected data is set as first corrected data **C1**.

In step **S52**, which is executed all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero or the **EN1** and the **EN2** satisfy "$EN1 \neq EN2$, $EN1 > 3$ or $EN2 > 3$", the input data **DI** is set as the first corrected data **C1** as it is.

In step **S90** shown in Fig. **2**, the following steps **S91** and **S92** are executed to compute syndromes of the first corrected data **C1**.

In step **S91**, using the following polynomials:

Polynomial of the first corrected data **C1** including only the unextended component $D_0(x) = d_{126}x^{126} + d_{125}x^{125} + \ldots + d_1x + d_0$; and

Polynomial of the first corrected data **C1** including the unextended component and the extended component $D(x) = d_{126}x^{127} + d_{125}x^{126} + \ldots + d_1x^2 + d_0x + d_-$, syndromes of the first corrected data **C1** $= (d_{126}, d_{125}, \ldots, d_1, d_0, d_-)$ are computed as corrected data syndromes **SC**. Specifically, in step **S91A**, the corrected data syndromes of the unextended component are computed as follows.

$SC_i = D_0(\alpha^i) = d_{126}(\alpha^i)^{126} + d_{125}(\alpha^i)^{125} + \ldots + d_1\alpha^i + d_0$, where i = 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

In step **S91B**, the corrected data syndromes of the extended component are computed as follows.

$SC_6 = D_0(\alpha^6) + d_- = d_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + d_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + d_1\alpha^6 + d_0 + d_-$

In step **S92**, it is determined whether the determination condition of "ARE ALL CORRECTED DATA SYNDROMES ZERO OR 'EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 $>$ 3, OR EN2 $>$ 3'?" is true. When the determination condition is true, it is determined that the first corrected data **C1** has no error and the process proceeds to step **S101** in step **S100**. When the determination condition is not true (one of the corrected data syndromes **SC** is not zero and 'EN1 $=$ EN2 $\leq$ 3'), it is determined that the first corrected data **C1** has an error and the process proceeds to step **S102** in step **S100**.

Step **S100** is a second error correction step. Specifically, steps

S101 and **S102** are executed.

In step **S101**, since it is determined that the first corrected data **C1** has no error, the first corrected data **C1** is output as second corrected data **C2** as it is.

In step **S102**, since it is determined that the first corrected data **C1** has an error, the first corrected data **C1** is restored to the input data **DI** based on the error locations j_u and error magnitudes e_u corresponding to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ and the error magnitude e_- of the extended component. Specifically, the corresponding error magnitude e_u is added to or subtracted from the symbol at the error location j_u of the first corrected data **C1**, and the error magnitude e_- is further added to or subtracted from the symbol of the extended component in the first corrected data **C1** (that is, the error magnitude e_u and error magnitude e_- are added to or subtracted from the symbol of the extended component of the first corrected data **C1**). The restored input data **DI** thus obtained is output as the second corrected data **C2**.

Fig. **3** is a detailed flowchart for an error number estimation step **S60** shown in Fig. **1**. Hereinafter, a method for estimating the number of errors will be described with reference to Fig. **3**.

In step **S61**, it is determined whether all the input data syndromes **SI** computed in the input data syndrome computation step **S11** in the first syndrome computation step **S10** are zero. When all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero, the process proceeds to step **S62**. When one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S63**.

In step **S62**, which is executed when it is determined that all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero, it is estimated that the number of errors is zero.

In step **S63**, which is executed when it is determined that one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero, the following first to fourth error number estimation equations are computed.

First error number estimation equation $N_1 = S_2^2 + S_1S_3$

Second error number estimation equation $N_2 = S_3^2 + S_1S_5$

Third error number estimation equation $N_3 = S_4^2 + S_3S_5$

Fourth error number estimation equation $N_4 = S_5N_1 + S_3N_2 + S_1N_3$

In step **S64**, it is determined whether all the values computed from the first, second and third error number estimation equations (N_1, N_2 and N_3) are zero. When all the values of N_1, N_2 and N_3 are zero, the process proceeds to step **S65**. When one of the values of N_1, N_2 and N_3 is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S68**.

In step **S65**, which is executed when it is determined that all the values of N_1, N_2 and N_3 are zero in step **S64**, it is determined whether an extended component **SI**$_6$ of the input data syndromes **SI** computed in step **S11** is zero. When **SI**$_6$ is zero, the process proceeds to step **S66**. When **SI**$_6$ is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S67**.

In step **S66**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is zero in step **S65**, it is estimated that the number of errors is one.

In step **S67**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is not zero in step **S65**, it is estimated that the number of errors is two.

In step **S68**, which is executed when it is determined that one the values of N_1, N_2 and N_3 is not zero in step **S64**, it is determined whether the fourth error number estimation equation N_4 is zero. When N_4 is zero, the process proceeds to step **S69**. When N_4 is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S72**.

In step **S69**, which is executed when it is determined that the value of N_4 is zero in step **S68**, it is determined whether the extended component **SI**$_6$ of the input data syndromes **SI** is zero. When **SI**$_6$ is zero, the process proceeds to step **S70**. When **SI**$_6$ is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S71**.

In step **S70**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is zero in step **S69**, it is estimated that the number of errors is two.

In step **S71**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is not zero in step **S69**, it is estimated that the number of errors is three.

In step **S72**, which is executed when it is determined that the value of N_4 is not zero in step **S68**, it is determined whether **SI**$_6$ is zero. When **SI**$_6$ is zero, the process proceeds to step **S73**. When **SI**$_6$ is not zero, the process proceeds to step **S74**.

In step **S73**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is zero in step **S72**, it is estimated that the number of errors is three.

In step **S74**, which is executed when it is determined that **SI**$_6$ is not zero in step **S72**, it is estimated that the number of errors is four.

As described above, in the decoding method of the present invention, the number of errors **EN1** estimated from the input data syndromes **SI** is compared with the number of errors **EN2** computed in the decoding process. After the error correction processing is performed based on this comparison result and the input data syndromes **SI**, syndromes of the error corrected data **C1** are computed again to obtain the corrected data syndromes **SC**. When the input data **DI** is erroneously corrected or the estimated number of errors **EN1** differs from the computed number of errors **EN2**, the input data **DI** is output as the second corrected data **C2**. Therefore, it is possible to prevent erroneous correction from being performed for the unextended component and the extended component and dispense with performing plural times of Euclidean algorithm operations and plural times of Chien searches.

In Fig. **1**, the number of errors **NB** in the extended component is obtained in step **S51B**. Alternatively, as indicated by a one-dot chain line in Fig. **1**, $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ may be computed based on the input data **DI** and the error locations j_u and the error magnitudes e_u corresponding to the respective roots α^{-j_u} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ in step **S40**, the number of errors **NB** in the extended component may be obtained according to whether $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is zero, and the result may be reflected in the process executed in step **S80**.

Further, as indicated by a one-dot chain line extended from step **S52** shown in Fig. **1** into step **S100** shown in Fig. **2**, when all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero or "EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 > 3 or EN2 > 3", the input data **DI** may be output as the second corrected data **C2** as it is.

In step **S80** shown in Fig. **1**, the number of errors **NA** is obtained based on the roots α^{-j_u}. Alternatively, the number of errors **NA** may be obtained in step **S30**. In addition, steps **S62** and **S63** shown in Fig. **3** can be executed, in place of step **S61** shown in Fig. **3**, using the determination result of step **S12** shown in Fig. **1**.

Furthermore, by omitting the processings of steps **S60**, **S80** and **S53** shown in Fig. **1**, only the corrected data syndromes **SC** may be computed and the computation result may be used for preventing erroneous correction without estimating and computing the number of errors.

The configuration of a device that realizes the decoding method according to the present invention will next be described.

Fig. **4** is a block diagram illustrating an extended Reed-Solomon decoding device according to the present invention. In Fig. **4**, reference symbol **10** denotes a syndrome computation section, **20** denotes an evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section, **30** denotes a Chien search section, **40** denotes an error correction section, **50** denotes a data storage section, **60** denotes an error number estimation section, and **70** denotes an error number computation section.

The input data **DI** is input to the syndrome computation section **10** and the data storage section **50**. The data storage section **50** stores the input data **DI** and then outputs data **XDI** that is the same as the input data **DI** to the error correction section **40**.

The syndrome computation section **10** computes syndromes of the input data **DI** = $(y_{126}, y_{125}, \ldots, y_1, y_0, y_-)$ as input data syndromes **SI**. Specifically, the syndrome computation section **10** computes input data syndromes of an unextended component as follows.

$SI_i = Y_0(\alpha^i) = y_{126}(\alpha^i)^{126} + y_{125}(\alpha^i)^{125} + \ldots + y_1\alpha^i + y_0$, where i = 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

In addition, the syndrome computation section **10** computes input data syndromes of an extended component as follows.

$SI_6 = Y_0(\alpha^6) + y_- = y_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + y_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + y_1\alpha^6 + y_0 + y_-$.

Further, the syndrome computation section **10** detects whether all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero. When all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero, the syndrome computation section **10** determines that the input data **DI** has no error, and asserts a first flag signal **F1**, and outputs the first flag signal **F1** to the error correction section **40**. When one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero, the syndrome computation section **10** determines that the input data **DI** has an error, negates the first flag signal **F1**, and outputs the first flag signal **F1** to the error correction section **40**. In either case, the syndrome computation section **10** outputs the input data syndromes **SI** to the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** and the error number estimation section **60**. It is noted that the input data syndromes output to the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** and those output to the error number estimation section **60** are differently denoted by **XSI** and **SI**, respectively.

The error number estimation section **60** estimates the number of errors **EN1** generated in the input data **DI** from the input data syndromes **SI** computed by the syndrome computation section **10**.

The evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** computes coefficients at each order of the error locator polynomial σ(z) and the error evaluator polynomial ω(z) from the input data syndromes **XSI** by Euclidean algorithm operation and outputs the resultant coefficients of the polynomials to the Chien search section **30**. The evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** includes a data holder and a Galois operator. The data holder holds the input data syndromes **XSI** and intermediate results of Euclidean algorithm operation, and finally outputs the coefficients at each order of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ and the error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$. The Galois operator executes Euclidean algorithm operation for the output of the data holder to obtain the intermediate results, and outputs the obtained intermediate results to the data holder. It is noted that the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** outputs the coefficients of these polynomials even when the order of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ is equal to or less than the order of the error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$ at the completion of the Euclidean algorithm operation.

The Chien search section **30** performs a Chien search to determine roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$. Specifically, the Chien search section **30** sequentially substitutes elements of the Galois field $GF(2^7)$ in the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$, determines the elements of which substitution makes the value of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ zero as the roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$, and outputs the roots to the error correction section **40** and the error number computation section **70**. At this time, even when the number of different roots of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ in the Galois field $GF(2^7)$ is less than the order of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$, the Chien search section **30** does not make decision on whether error correction is possible, and outputs the roots α^{-ju} to the error correction section **40** and the error number computation section **70**. The error locations j_u correspond to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$. Further, the Chien search section **30** substitutes the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ in the error evaluator polynomial $\omega(z)$ to obtain respective error evaluation values $\omega(\alpha^{-ju})$, and also substitutes the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ in the derivative of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ to obtain error locator polynomial differential values $\sigma'(\alpha^{-ju})$. The Chien search section **30** outputs the error evaluation values $\omega(\alpha^{-ju})$ and the error locator polynomial differential values $\sigma'(\alpha^{-ju})$ to the evaluator/locator deriving section **20**. The Galois operator of the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** divides each of the error evaluation values $\omega(\alpha^{-ju})$ by the corresponding error locator polynomial differential value $\sigma'(\alpha^{-ju})$ to obtain an error magnitude e_u that indicates an error bit in the symbol at the error location j_u, and outputs the obtained error magnitude e_u to the error correction section **40**.

The error number computation section **70** adds up the number of errors **NA** obtained from the roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ computed by the Chien search section **30** and the number of errors **NB** in the extended component output from the error correction section **40**. Specifically, the error number computation section **70** computes:

Number of errors EN2 = NA + NB.

The error number computation section **70** supplies the computed number of errors **EN2** to the error correction section **40**. It is noted that the number of errors in the extended component is not repeatedly added to the number of errors **NA**.

The error correction section **40** performs error correction for the input data **XDI** output from the data storage section **50** based on the error locations j_u corresponding to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ output from the Chien search section **30** and the error magnitudes e_u output from the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section

20 to obtain error corrected data. In addition, the error correction section **40** obtains the following polynomials.

Polynomial of error corrected data including only the unextended component $F_0(x) = f_{126}x^{126} + f_{125}x^{125} + \ldots + f_1x^1 + f_0$.

Polynomial of error corrected data including the unextended component and the extended component $F(x) = xF_0(x) + f_- = f_{126}x^{127} + f_{125}x^{126} + \ldots + f_1x^2 + f_0x + f_-$, where f_- is the extended component (tentative value).

Specifically, error correction section **40** subtracts the corresponding error magnitude e_u from the symbol at the error location j_u of the input data **XDI**. Since this is an operation in the extension field of the Galois field GF(2), addition of the error magnitude e_u to the symbol is allowed in place of the subtraction. As for the extended component, the error correction section **40** substitutes $x=\alpha^6$ in the polynomial $F_0(x)$ of the error corrected data including only the unextended component, and further adds the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the extended component in the error corrected data to the substitution result. That is, the error correction section **40** performs the following computation.

$$F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = f_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + f_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + f_1\alpha^6 + f_0 + f_-.$$

When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is zero, it is determined that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has no error. Therefore, the error correction section **40** sets the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as the error corrected data on the extended component as it is, and determines that the number of errors of the extended component NB = 0. When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is not zero, the error correction section **40** determines that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has an error and computes the error magnitude e_- of the extended component f_- of the error corrected data as $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$. Thereafter, the error correction section **40** performs error correction for the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data, i.e., adds the error magnitude $e_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ to the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as follows.

$$f_- + e_- = f_- + F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + 2f_- = F_0(\alpha^6).$$

The error correction section **40** sets $F_0(\alpha^6)$ as the error corrected data including the extended component and sets the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at one (NB = 1). Further, the error correction section **40** determines whether the number of errors **EN1** estimated by the error number estimation section **60** is equal to the number of errors **EN2** computed by the error number computation section **70** and whether the number of errors **EN1** estimated by the error number estimation section **60** and the number of errors **EN2** computed by the error number computation section **70** are both equal to or less than three (the number of corrections t), i.e., whether **EN1** and **EN2** satisfy a relationship of "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$". When "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$" is satisfied, the error correction section **40** asserts a third flag signal **F3** to be described later. In addition, when "$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$" (the third flag signal **F3** is active) and one of the input data syndromes **SI** is not zero (the first flag signal **F1** is inactive and error correction is necessary), the error correction section **40** outputs the error corrected data to the syndrome computation section **10** and the data storage section **50** as the first corrected data **C1**. When not, i.e., "$EN1 \neq EN2$, $EN1 > 3$ or $EN2 > 3$" (the third flag signal **F3** is inactive) or all the input data syndromes **SI** are zero (the first flag signal **F1** is active and error correction is unnecessary), the error correction section **40** outputs the input data **XDI** output from the data storage section **50** to the syndrome computation section **10** and the data storage section **50** as the first corrected data **C1**.

The data storage section **50** stores the first corrected data **C1**, and returns the same corrected data **XC1** as the first corrected data **C1** to the error correction section **40**.

The syndrome computation section **10** computes syndromes of the first corrected data C1 = $(d_{126}, d_{125}, \ldots, d_1, d_0, d_-)$ as corrected data syndromes **SC**, using the following polynomials:

Polynomial of the first corrected data **C1** including only the unextended component $D_0(x) = d_{126}x^{126} + d_{125}x^{125} + \ldots + d_1x + d_0$; and

Polynomial of the first corrected data **C1** $D(x) = d_{126}x^{127} + d_{125}x^{126} + \ldots + d_1x^2 + d_0x + d_-$. Specifically, the syndrome computation section **10** computes the corrected data syndromes of the unextended component are computed as follows.

$SC_i = D_0(\alpha^i) = d_{126}(\alpha^i)^{126} + d_{125}(\alpha^i)^{125} + \ldots + d_1\alpha^i + d_0$, where i = 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Further, the syndrome computation section **10** computes the corrected data syndromes of the extended component as follows.

$SC_6 = D_0(\alpha^6) + d_- = d_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + d_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + d_1\alpha^6 + d_0 + d_-$

In addition, the syndrome computation section **10** determines whether the determination condition of "ARE ALL CORRECTED DATA SYNDROMES ZERO OR 'EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 > 3, OR EN2 > 3' (THIRD FLAG SIGNAL IS INACTIVE)?" is true. When the determination condition is true, the syndrome computation section **10** determines that the first corrected data **C1** has no error, asserts a second flag signal **F2**, and outputs the second flag signal **F2** to the error correction section **40**. When not, i.e., one of the corrected data syndromes **SC** is not zero and 'EN1 = EN2 $\leq$ 3' (the third flag signal **F3** is active), the syndrome computation section **10** determines that the first corrected data **C1** has an error, negates the second flag signal **F2**, and outputs the second flag signal **F2** to the error correction section **40**.

When the second flag signal **F2** is active, it is considered that the first corrected data **C1** has no error. Therefore, the error correction section **40** outputs the first corrected data **XC1** output from the data storage section **50** as second corrected data **C2** as it is. When the second flag signal **F2** is inactive, it is considered that the first corrected data **C1** has an error. Therefore, the error correction section **40** restores the first corrected data **XC1** output from the data storage section **50** to the input data **DI** based on the error locations j_u corresponding to the respective roots α^{-ju} of the error locator polynomial $\sigma(z)$ output from the Chien search section **30**, error magnitudes e_u output from the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20**, and the error magnitude e_- of the extended component. Specifically, the error correction section **40** adds or subtracts the corresponding error magnitude e_u to or from the symbol at the error location J_u of the first corrected data **XC1**, and further adds or subtracts the error magnitude e_- to or from the symbol of the extended component of the first corrected data **XC1** (that is, adds or subtracts the error magnitude e_u and error magnitude e_- to or from the symbol of the extended component of the first corrected data **XC1**). The error correction section **40** outputs the restored input data **DI** thus obtained as the second corrected data **C2**.

Fig. **5** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of the syndrome computation section **10** shown in Fig. **4**. In Fig. **5**, reference symbol **11** denotes a selector, **12** denotes a syndrome operator, **13** denotes an input data syndrome holder, **14** denotes a corrected data syndrome holder, **15** denotes a first zero syndrome detector, and **16** denotes a second zero syndrome detector.

The selector **11** selects the input data **DI** or the first corrected data **C1** in accordance with a mode signal **MOD**, and outputs the selected data to the syndrome operator **12**.

The syndrome operator **12**, which operates in synchronization with the selector **11** in accordance with the mode signal **MOD**, performs computation for obtaining the input data syndromes **SI** and that for obtaining the corrected data syndromes **SC**, outputs the result of computation for obtaining the input data syndromes **SI** to the input data syndrome holder **13** and the error number estimation section **60**, and outputs the result of computation for obtaining the corrected data syndromes **SC** to the corrected data syndrome holder **14**. In order to make a circuit scale small, it is preferable to constitute the syndrome holder **12** so that an unextended component syndrome processing and an extended component syndrome processing are performed by the same processor.

The input data syndrome holder **13** fetches and holds only the input data syndromes **SI** among the outputs of the syndrome operator **12** in accordance with the mode signal **MOD**, and then outputs the input data syndromes **SI** to the first zero syndrome detector **15** as input data syndromes **XSI**.

When all the input data syndromes **XSI** are zero, the first zero syndrome detector **15** determines that the input data **DI** has no error, and asserts the first flag signal **F1**. When one of the input data syndromes **XSI** is not zero, the first zero syndrome detector **15** determines that the input data **DI** has an error, negates the first flag signal **F1**, and outputs the first flag signal **F1** to the error correction section **40**.

Further, the input data syndrome holder **13** outputs the input data syndromes **XSI** to the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** synchronously with a timing at which the first zero syndrome detector **15** outputs the first flag signal **F1**.

Likewise, the corrected data syndrome holder **14** fetches and holds only the corrected data syndromes **SC** among the outputs of the syndrome operator **12** in accordance with the mode signal **MOD**, and then outputs the corrected data syndromes **SC** to the second zero syndrome detector **16**.

When all the corrected data syndromes **SC** are zero, the second zero syndrome detector **16** determines that the first corrected data **C1** has no error, and asserts the second flag signal **F2**. When one of the corrected data syndromes **SC** is not zero, the second zero syndrome detector **16** determines that the first corrected data **C1** has an error, negates the second flag signal **F2**, and outputs the second flag signal **F2** to the error correction section **40**.

Fig. **6** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of the error correction section **40** shown in Fig. **4**. In Fig. **6**, reference symbol **41** denotes a first error corrector, **42** denotes an error location data holder, **43** denotes an error magnitude data holder, **44** denotes a second error corrector, and **45** denotes a comparator.

The comparator **45** compares the number of errors **EN1** estimated by the error number estimation section **60** with the number of errors **EN2** computed by the error number computation section **70**, and further compares these numbers of errors **EN1** and **EN2** with three (the number of error corrections t). When "EN1 = EN2 $\leq$ 3", the comparator **45** asserts the third flag signal **F3**. When not ("EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 > 3 or EN2 > 3"), the comparator **45** negates the third flag signal **F3**, and outputs the third flag signal **F3** to the first error corrector **41** and the second error corrector **44**.

When the first flag signal **F1** is active (it is unnecessary to perform error correction for the input data **DI**) or the third flag signal **F3** is inactive ("EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 > 3 or EN2 > 3"), the first error corrector **41** outputs the input data **DI** as the first corrected data **C1** as it is and sets the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at zero (NB = 0). When the first flag signal **F1** is inactive (the input data **DI** has an error and it is necessary to correct the error) and the third flag signal **F3** is active ("EN1 = EN2 $\leq$ 3"), the first error corrector **41** performs error correction for the input data **XDI**, i.e., subtracts or adds the error magnitudes e_u corresponding to the respective error locations j_u, which correspond to the roots α^{-ju}, to or from the symbols of the input data **XDI** indicated by the error locations j_u. The first error corrector **41** outputs the corrected data as error corrected data. For the extended component, the first error corrector **41** substitutes $x=\alpha^6$ in the polynomial $F_0(x)$ of the error corrected data including only the unextended component, and further adds the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data to the substitution result. That is, the first error corrector **41** performs the following computation.

$$F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = f_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + f_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \dots + f_1\alpha^6 + f_0 + f_-.$$

When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is zero, it is considered that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has no error. Therefore, the first error corrector **41** sets the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as the error corrected data on the extended component as it is and sets that the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at zero (NB = 0). When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is not zero, the first error corrector **41** determines that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has an error, and computes the error magnitude e_- of the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$. Thereafter, the first error corrector **41** performs error correction for the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data, i.e., adds the error magnitude $e_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ to the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as follows.

$$f_- + e_- = f_- + F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + 2f_- = F_0(\alpha^6).$$

The first error corrector **41** sets the addition result as the error corrected data including the extended component and sets the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at one (NB = 1). The first error corrector **41** outputs the error corrected data as the first corrected data **C1**. The first error corrected data **C1** thus obtained is output to the syndrome computation section **10** and the data storage section **50**.

The error location data holder **42** stores the roots α^{-j_u} and the error locations j_{-} for the extended component, and outputs the stored roots and locations to the second error corrector **44**.

The error magnitude data holder **43** stores the error magnitude e_u and the error magnitude e_{-} for the extended component, and outputs the stored magnitudes to the second error corrector **44**.

The second error corrector **44** outputs the first corrected data **XC1** as the second corrected data **C2** as it is when the second flag signal **F2** is active (it is unnecessary to perform error correction for the first corrected data **C1**) or the third flag signal **F3** is inactive ("EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 $>$ 3 or EN2 $>$ 3"). When the second flag signal **F2** is inactive (the first corrected data **C1** has an error and it is necessary to correct the error) and the third flag signal **F3** is active ("EN1 = EN2 $\leq$ 3"), second error corrector **44** restores the first corrected data **XC1** to the input data **DI** based on the error locations j_u and the error magnitudes e_u corresponding to the roots α^{-j_u} and, also, based on the error location j_{-} and the error magnitude e_{-} for the extended component. This restoration can be performed by adding or subtracting the error magnitudes e_u corresponding to the error location j_u to or from the symbols of the first corrected data **XC1** indicated by the error locations j_u. As for the extended component, the restoration can be performed by further adding or subtracting the error magnitude e_{-} corresponding to the error location j_{-} (extended component) to or from the symbol (extended component) of the first corrected data **XC1** indicated by the error location j_{-} (that is, by adding or subtracting the error magnitudes e_u and e_{-} to or from the symbol of the extended component of the first corrected data **XC1**). The second error corrector **44** outputs the restored input data **DI** as the second corrected data **C2**. As described above, when the first error corrector **41** fails to perform the error correction and the first corrected error **C1** has an error, the second error corrector **44** outputs not the first corrected data **C1** but the restored input data **DI**.

Fig. **7** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of the first error correction section **41** shown in Fig. **6**. In Fig. **7**, reference symbol **41A** denotes an error correction processor, **41B** denotes an extended component error correction processor, and **41C** denotes a bus driver.

The error correction processor **41A** outputs the input data **XDI** as the first corrected data as it is when the first flag signal **F1** is active (it is unnecessary to perform error correction for the input data **DI**) or the third flag signal **F3** is inactive ("$EN1 \neq EN2$, $EN1 > 3$ or $EN2 > 3$"). When the first flag signal **F1** is inactive (the input data **DI** has an error and it is necessary to correct the error) and the third flag signal **F3** is active ("$EN1 = EN2 \leq 3$"), the error correction processor **41A** performs error correction by subtracting or adding the error magnitudes e_u for the error locations j_u from or to the symbols indicated by the error locations j_u corresponding to the roots α^{-j_u} in the input data **XDI**, and outputs the corrected data as the first corrected data.

The extended component error correction processor **41B** outputs the extended component of the error corrected data (tentative value) (extended component input data **XDI**) of the error corrected data as the first corrected data on the extended component as it is, and sets the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at zero ($NB = 0$) when the first flag signal **F1** is active (it is unnecessary to perform error correction for the input data **DI**) or the third flag signal **F3** is inactive ("EN1 $\neq$ EN2, EN1 > 3 or EN2 > 3"). When the first flag signal **F1** is inactive (the input data **DI** has an error and it is necessary to correct the error) and the third flag signal **F3** is active ("EN1 = EN2 $\leq$ 3"), the extended component error correction processor **41B** further adds the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data to the polynomial $F_0(x)$ of the error corrected data including only the unextended component, in which $x = \alpha^6$ is substituted. Specifically, the extended component error correction processor **41B** performs the following computation for the extended data.

$$F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = f_{126}(\alpha^6)^{126} + f_{125}(\alpha^6)^{125} + \ldots + f_1\alpha^6 + f_0 + f_-.$$

When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is zero, it is considered that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has no error. Therefore, the extended component error correction processor **41B** sets the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as the error corrected data on the extended component as it is, and determines that the number of errors in the extended component **NB** is zero (NB = 0). When $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ is not zero, the extended component error correction processor **41B** determines that the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data has an error, and computes the error magnitude e_- of the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as $F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$. Thereafter, the extended component error correction processor **41B** performs error correction for the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data, i.e., adds the error magnitude $e_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + f_-$ to the extended component f_- (tentative value) of the error corrected data as follows.

$$f_- + e_- = f_- + F_0(\alpha^6) + f_- = F_0(\alpha^6) + 2f_- = F_0(\alpha^6).$$

The extended component error correction processor **41B** sets the addition result as the error corrected data including the extended component and sets the number of errors in the extended component **NB** at one (NB = 1). The extended component error correction processor **41B** outputs the error corrected data on the extended component as the first corrected data on the extended component.

The bus driver **41C** batch-outputs the first corrected data from the error correction processor **41A** and the first corrected data on the extended component from the extended component error correction processor **41B** as first corrected data **C1** made of the unextended component and the extended component.

As described above, in the decoding device shown in Figs. **4** to **7**, the error correction section **40** compares the number of errors **EN1** estimated from the input data syndromes **SI** by the error number estimation section **60** with the number of errors **EN2** computed by the error number computation section **70** in the decoding process. After the error correction section **40** performs the error correction based on this comparison result and the input data syndromes **SI**, the syndrome computation section 10 performs syndrome computation again for the error corrected data **C1** to obtain the corrected data syndromes **SC**. When the input data **DI** is erroneously corrected or the estimated number of errors **EN1** differs from the computed number of errors **EN2**, the input data **DI** is output as the second corrected data **C2**.

The function of the error number estimation section **60** shown in Fig. **4** and that of the error number calculation section **70** may be moved into the syndrome computation section **10** and the error correction section **40**, respectively.

In Fig. **4**, the error number computation section **70** obtains the number of errors **NA** from the roots α^{-ju}. Alternatively, the Chien search section **30** may obtain the number of errors **NA**.

Further, the processings performed by the two processors **41A** and **41B** shown in Fig. **7** may be performed by the same processor.

The syndrome operator **12** shown in Fig. **5** may be constituted so that different processors perform the extended component processing and the extended component processing, respectively. Fig. **8** is a block diagram illustrating important constituent elements of the syndrome operator **12** constituted as described above. In Fig. **8**, reference symbol **12A** denotes an unextended component syndrome processor, **12B** denotes an extended component syndrome processor, and **12C** denotes a bus driver.

The unextended component syndrome processor **12A** computes syndromes of the unextended component of the input data **DI** and those of the unextended component of the first corrected data **C1**, and outputs the computed syndromes to the bus driver **12C**.

The extended component syndrome processor **12B** computes syndromes of the extended component of the input data **DI** and those of the extended component of the first corrected data **C1**, and outputs the computed syndromes to the bus driver **12C**.

The bus driver **12C** batch-outputs the syndromes of the input data unextended component from the unextended component syndrome processor **12A** and the syndromes of the input data extended component from the extended component syndrome processor **12B** as the input data syndromes **SI**. The bus driver **12C** batch-outputs the syndromes of the corrected data unextended component from the unextended component syndrome processor **12A** and syndromes of the corrected data extended component from the extended component syndrome processor **12B** as the corrected data syndromes **SC**.

It is preferable to adopt a pipeline architecture in which the processings such as the computation of the input data syndromes **SI** by the syndrome computation section **10** are performed at a first stage, the processings by the evaluator/locator polynomial deriving section **20** and the Chien search section **30** are performed at a second stage, the processings such as the output of the first corrected data **C1** by the error correction section **40** and the computation of the corrected data syndromes **SC** by the syndrome computation section **10** are performed at a third stage, and the output processing of the second corrected data **C2** by the error correction section **40** is performed at a fourth stage. The syndrome computation section **10** operates with a frequency twice as high as a reference clock signal and is used twice (at the first and third stages) in a series of decoding processes.

As described above, the decoding method and the decoding device according to the present invention can prevent erroneous correction during decoding and can be effectively used for multiple error correction for the Reed-Solomon code or the extended Reed-Solomon code in digital broadcasting, digital magnetic recording and the like.